

ASSEMBLY, No. 1621

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Assemblywoman PAMELA R. LAMPITT

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Assemblywoman MILA M. JASEY

District 27 (Essex and Morris)

Assemblywoman VALERIE VAINIERI HUTTLE

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SYNOPSIS

Establishes pilot program in DOE for special education students to attend college courses or vocational training programs.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** concerning postsecondary planning for students with
2 disabilities and supplementing chapter 46 of Title 18A of the
3 New Jersey Statutes.

4
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
6 *of New Jersey:*

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8 1. a. The Commissioner of Education shall establish a four-
9 year pilot program in which students age 16 or older who are
10 classified as eligible for special education programs and services, as
11 part of the plan of transition services required to be included in the
12 student's individualized education program, will attend courses at
13 an institution of higher education or participate in postsecondary
14 vocational training programs while still enrolled in high school. The
15 purpose of the pilot program shall be to increase the access of
16 students with disabilities to postsecondary opportunities to pursue
17 higher education or career and technical education and to help
18 prepare the students for their desired future goals.

19 b. Under the pilot program, participating school districts shall
20 partner with county colleges or other local institutions of higher
21 education and with county vocational schools to provide
22 opportunities for students with disabilities to attend courses and
23 programs offered by the institution or school. A participating
24 school district shall make efforts to ensure that, to the extent
25 feasible and when desired by the student, the transition services
26 included in the individualized education program for a student age
27 16 or older include the opportunity to attend college courses or
28 participate in postsecondary vocational training programs.

29 c. A school district that wants to participate in the pilot
30 program shall submit a proposal to the commissioner. The proposal
31 shall include information on the following:

32 (1) the estimated number of students with disabilities enrolled in
33 the district who will be eligible to participate in the pilot program;

34 (2) identification of the county colleges, four-year institutions of
35 higher education, and county vocational schools that the district will
36 partner with under the program;

37 (3) the school district's plans for funding any costs associated
38 with participation in the pilot program; and

39 (4) any additional information as prescribed by the
40 commissioner.

41 d. The commissioner shall select up to 15 school districts for
42 participation in the pilot program. To the maximum extent
43 possible, the commissioner shall select school districts in the
44 northern, central, and southern regions of the State and shall seek a
45 cross section of districts from urban, suburban, and rural areas.

46 e. A participating school district shall be responsible for the
47 cost of tuition for students with disabilities who attend college

1 courses or participate in postsecondary vocational programs under
2 the pilot program.

3
4 2. a. At the conclusion of the pilot program, each participating
5 school district shall submit a report to the commissioner. The
6 report from each district shall include, at a minimum, information
7 on the number of students who participated in the program, the
8 number and specific types of college courses and postsecondary
9 vocational programs attended by the students, feedback collected
10 from students who participated in the program, and the district's
11 views on the success and benefits of the program.

12 b. After receiving the reports from each participating school
13 district, the commissioner shall submit a report to the Governor, and
14 to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
15 (C.52:14-19.1), on the implementation and effectiveness of the pilot
16 program. The report shall include the commissioner's
17 recommendation on the advisability of the program's continuation
18 and expansion to additional school districts in the State.

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20 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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25 Under current State Board of Education regulations at
26 N.J.A.C.6A:14-3.7(e)12, the individualized education program
27 (IEP) for a student with a disability who is age 16 or older must
28 include a statement of appropriate transition services intended to
29 assist the student in preparing for postsecondary goals, such as
30 education, vocational training, and employment. This bill
31 establishes a four-year pilot program in which students age 16 or
32 older who are classified as eligible for special education programs
33 and services, as part of the plan of transition services required to be
34 included in the student's IEP, will attend courses at an institution of
35 higher education or participate in postsecondary vocational training
36 programs while still enrolled in high school. The purpose of the
37 pilot program is to increase the access of students with disabilities
38 to postsecondary opportunities to pursue higher education or career
39 and technical education and to help prepare these students for their
40 desired future goals.

41 A school district that wants to participate in the pilot program
42 will submit a proposal to the Commissioner of Education, and the
43 commissioner will select up to 15 school districts for participation.
44 To the maximum extent possible, the commissioner will select
45 districts in the northern, central, and southern regions of the State
46 and will seek a cross section of districts from urban, suburban, and
47 rural areas. Under the pilot program, participating school districts
48 will partner with county colleges or other local institutions of

1 higher education and with county vocational schools to provide
2 opportunities for students with disabilities to attend courses and
3 programs offered by the institution or school. A participating
4 school district will make efforts to ensure that, to the extent feasible
5 and when desired by the student, the transition services included in
6 the IEP for a student age 16 or older include the opportunity to
7 attend college courses or participate in postsecondary vocational
8 training programs. Under the bill, the participating school districts
9 will be responsible for the tuition costs for students with disabilities
10 who attend college courses or participate in postsecondary
11 vocational programs under the pilot program.

12 At the conclusion of the pilot program, the bill requires each
13 participating school district to submit a report to the Commissioner
14 of Education, which includes information on the number of students
15 who participated in the program, the number and specific types of
16 college courses and postsecondary vocational programs attended by
17 the students, feedback collected from students who participated in
18 the program, and the district's views on the success and benefits of
19 the program. The bill directs the commissioner, after receiving the
20 reports from the participating districts, to submit a report to the
21 Governor and the Legislature on the implementation and
22 effectiveness of the pilot program. The report also will include the
23 commissioner's recommendation on the advisability of the
24 program's continuation and expansion to additional school districts
25 in the State.